

**House International Relations Committee**  
**Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats**  
**Statement of Chairman Elton Gallegly**  
**Markup of H. Con. Res. 155**  
June 21, 2005

The second item on the agenda today is the consideration of H. Con. Res. 155, a resolution supporting free and fair elections in Albania introduced by my colleague and friend, Representative Chris Smith of New Jersey, the Vice Chairman of the International Relations Committee. The resolution urges Albania to hold its July 3 parliamentary elections in accordance with international standards.

This election is not only important as Albania works to develop its democratic system, but they will set the tone for that nation in the months and years ahead as it strives to become a fully democratic member of European and Euro-Atlantic institutions.

The United States and Albania have strong ties and share common objectives on many issues, such as defeating international terrorism, stopping human trafficking in the Balkans and fighting narco-trafficking. We are also working closely with the Albanian government on maintaining stability and achieving economic prosperity throughout the region.

I strongly support our friendship with Albania and support this resolution which encourages Albania to continue down the road towards developing strong and stable democratic institutions.

I urge the passage of H. Con. Res. 155. I will now turn to Congressman Wexler for the purposes of making a statement.